

ROTOVUE

Serving Marine Corps Air Station New River and Jacksonville, N.C.

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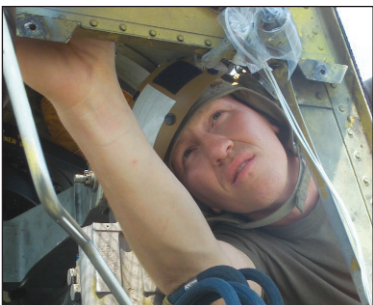
What you should know about boating safety.....Pg. 6



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HMM-266's hidden talents.....Pg. 15



Memorial Day to Remember



See page 2 for more information

Sgt. Arthur Stone

FLIGHTLINES

Reminders From PMO

The New River's Provost Marshal's Office would like to remind all personnel not to park on the grass aboard the Station. Also, all are reminded not to run or jog on Curtis Street, between the light at the PX and Highway 17.

Child Care Providers Wanted

We are seeking family members who want to work in their homes, aboard New River, providing childcare. Please call 449-5636 for more information.

Alternate Membership Cards

A new in-house membership card is available, providing the benefits of being a member without the use of a charge card! Officers may sign up at the club by filling out a brief application and paying the annual dues of \$144. Please see the club manager at the O-Club. SNCO annual dues are \$84. Please see Wanda or Willie at the SNCO Club.

Mongolian Night

A Mongolian Barbecue Night will be held June 20 at the SNCO Club and June 27 in the Landing Zone at the O-Club. For more information or to RSVP, please call the SNCO Club at 449-6707 or the O-Club at 449-6409.

Members' Birthday Dinner

The Landing Zone at the O-Club will be having a Members' Birthday Dinner June 11 from 5 to 7 p.m. For more information, call 449-6409.

Rotoball Basketball Camp

The third annual Rotoball Basketball Camp will be held July 21 - 25 at the Fitness Center. This camp teaches basic and advanced basketball skills, and is open to family members ages 7 through 15. Registration will be held until July 2. Space is limited, so register today. For more information, call 449-6714.

Kickin' Osprey Summer Soccer Camp

The second annual Kickin' Osprey Summer Soccer Camp will be held July 14 - 18 at the New River Soccer Field. This camp teaches basic and advanced soccer skills, and is open to family members ages 5 through 15. Registration will be held till July 1. Space is limited, so register today. For more information, call 449-6714.

USMC Motor Transport Association 7th Reunion

The event is scheduled for September 14 - 17 in

Niagara Falls, N.Y. For more information contact Hal Clapp by phone at 346-8797 or by e-mail at usmcmta@vol.com.

For membership information contact Terry Hightower at (541) 430-3855 or via e-mail at usmc_mta_membership@marinecorps.com.

Gladiator Challenge

Welcome home troops! A Gladiator Challenge between the Jacksonville Raiders Semi-Pro Football Team and the MCAS New River Devil Dogs will be held July 11 at building AS-202. Sign up today to represent the Marine Corps. The deadline for registration is July 7. For more information or to register, call 449-6003.

Canceling Appointments at Naval Hospital

Camp Lejeune Naval Hospital patients can now cancel appointments by calling 450-4500 for pediatric appointments or 450-4698 for appointments in the Family Medicine Clinic.

Choose option 2, leave the patient's name, date and the time of the appointment to cancel.

To reschedule, call TRI-CARE at (800) 931-9501.

Free Reunion Web Service Takes Off

Within days of its launch, the U.S. Naval Institute's new, free, online Military Reunions Service is promoting more than 190 reunions.

The service, designed to

link reunion organizers with potential reunion attendees, is available for reunions being sponsored by any military unit or group as well as any military-related association. The Web-based database allows participants to post and modify reunion notices, search for reunions, and sign up as a reunion attendee.

Reunion organizers create reunion listings using an easy, step-by-step form that includes all the basic reunion information, plus the preferred method to contact the organizer. Organizers also may enter updates to reunion information at any time and communicate updates to all registered attendees via individual or mass e-mail.

Potential attendees may search for specific reunions using keywords or branch of service. Registered attendees control access to the information they enter in the database - it can be limited to viewing only by the reunion organizer or by all attendees registered for that reunion.

Attendees also may make lodging plans based on where other attendees are staying.

Anyone may browse and search the reunion database. To post a reunion or sign up to attend an event requires the user to register online. Get your reunion the visibility it deserves, go to <http://www.usni.org/reunions/reunions.html> and register today.

On the Cover

First Lt. Eric J. Walther of Juniata, Neb., holds his son, Aiden, for the first time during the unit's homecoming on the flight line aboard New River on May 26.

ROTOVUE

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If you have any comments or suggestions you may also contact the public affairs office at (910) 449-6196 or fax (910) 449-6478.

Automobile Shipping Fraud

In recent months the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has noticed a marked increase in complaints concerning a potential automobile shipping fraud against servicemembers including Marines.

The modus operandi involves a company charging, up front, substantial fees to ship a servicemember's vehicle from continental United States to an overseas duty station. Once the servicemember pays, it appears that the shipping never occurs and legal recourse becomes more difficult once at the overseas location.

Servicemembers should report such practices immediately by logging a complaint with the Military Sentinel database at <http://www.consumer.gov/military>. Complaints so logged are reviewed by the FTC and may be investigated by the FTC or by the U.S. and participating foreign law enforcement agencies that utilize the database.

Marines should also immediately report such activities to law enforcement in the state where the business is located, and should visit their local Legal Assistance Office. Legal Assistance Attorneys are trained in consumer protection law and will provide advice and, resources permitting, will help logging an initial complaint into the Military Sentinel.

Please contact your local Legal Assistance Office with any questions regarding this advisory or for legal advice. CMC (Code JAL) may be reached at hqmclegal@hqmc.usmc.mil or at (703) 614-1266.

Asian Heritage



Cpl. Wayne Campbell

New River celebrated Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month, May 29.

Traffic safety: What the MPs do is designed to save your life

Sgt. Juan Vara
correspondent

In an effort to protect the force and preserve readiness, the Commandant of the Marine Corps approved changes to the Marine Corps Traffic Safety Program last month.

Aboard New River, the military police will begin issuing traffic citations Monday to whoever does not comply with these changes.

Operators of privately owned vehicles on Marine Corps installations shall not use cellular phones while the vehicle is in operation, unless they are using a hands-free device. A hands-free device is an accessory that is included with or available for most of today's cellular telephones that permits a driver to use the telephone without lifting or holding the handset to the driver's ear.

According to Maj. Mark D. Sumner, ground safety officer at Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, the idea here is to minimize distractions while driving.

"Driver distraction is one of the largest causes of accidents," said 1st Lt. Paul M. Ervasti, operations officer at the Station's Provost Marshal's Office. "Before you would be cited for using a cell phone only after causing an accident. Now we're going to look out for the Marines' safety, trying to prevent them from getting into that accident."

Also, on all installations, vehicles are to be operated with the headlights turned on during periods of precipitation and other reduced visibility conditions, whether or not required by state or national law. Examples are, but not limited to, periods of light or heavy rain, or periods of obscuration due to fog or smoke.

"In most of the states this is a law, when the windshield wipers come on the headlights come on," said Sumner. "Some vehicles



Sgt. Juan Vara

Changes to the Marine Corps Traffic Safety Program prohibit the use of cellular telephones while operating a vehicle.

have daytime running lights but the tail lights don't come on. Our intent is to have the driver manually turn on the headlights so the tail lights come on."

Minimum penalties for failure to wear seatbelts on Marine Corps installations were standardized. For the first violation, the penalty is a one-week suspension of driving privileges plus attendance at a four-hour remedial driving class focused on safety belts. For a second violation, a one-month suspension of driving privileges. For a third violation, the penalty is a six-month suspension of driving privileges.

"Since we started the 'Click it or Ticket' campaign we've done command authorized seatbelt checks," said Ervasti. "We've had less than a handful of violations. We've pulled over more than 500 vehicles and so far we're very pleased with the results."

Ervasti said the majority of drivers on Station understand the importance of wearing seatbelts.

"Once you get into the habit of clicking your seatbelt on your way to work you'll be a lot safer out on a highway," he said.

The requirements concerning the wearing of reflective clothing were also modified. Individuals

are now required to wear reflective clothing during periods of reduced visibility and before morning colors and after evening colors. All are required to jog facing traffic and obey traffic rules and regulations when conducting physical training or exercising on or near roadways.

According to Marie L. Silence, safety specialist at the Station's Safety and Environmental Affairs Office, pedestrians blend into their surroundings during periods of low visibility. Runners, bicyclists and pedestrians have a responsibility to themselves and their families to practice operational risk management and use common sense when sharing the road.

"We don't have any leeway on making this not happen," said Silence. "It's a Marine Corps directive and we have no flexibility."

According to Sumner, these changes were directed by the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps at an Executive Safety Board held in January. The ESB is part of a proactive approach to risk management and potential mishap elimination, focused on providing safety policy and guidance for the Corps.

24th MEU thanks local communities

Capt. Dan McSweeney
24th MEU PAO

Colonel Richard Mills, commanding officer, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), recently expressed his gratitude to citizens of the communities surrounding Camp Lejeune, New River, and Cherry Point for their displays of appreciation and support during the unit's recent homecoming from overseas.

"I want to express my sincere gratitude to the people of Eastern North Carolina for all they have done to make my Marines and I feel welcomed and appreciated," said Mills, a native of Huntington, N.Y.

"The treatment we received upon arriving home after nine months away was incredibly patriotic and supportive. It was a thrill for our Marines and Sailors to arrive and see all the American flags, yellow ribbons, and welcome signs. I have never seen anything like it."

The 24th MEU (SOC) deployed last August and participated in peace support, humanitarian, antiterrorism, and combat operations while overseas. The unit operated in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

Most recently, the unit augmented Task Force Tarawa in central Iraq.

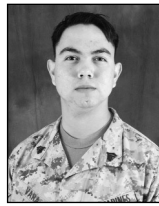
"Coming home after all our Marines and Sailors have been through and seeing all this attention helps remind us of why we deploy in the first place and reminds us of how wonderful the people of Eastern North Carolina are," said Mills.

"The entire MEU is grateful to all the patriots out there who took the time to express their support," he said.

Mills will relinquish command of the 24th MEU (SOC) to Col. Ron Johnson in a ceremony aboard Camp Lejeune on Friday. His next billet will be Deputy Chief of Staff at U.S. European Command.

Marines in civilian clothes: Looking good is the rule

Sgt. Juan Vara
correspondent



Wearing civilian clothes is a privilege extended to officers and enlisted Marines by the Commandant of the Marine Corps. A large percentage of Marines nowadays are not abiding by Marine Corps uniform regulations and it seems to me that very few are doing anything about it.

Because Marines may well be associated and identified with the Marine Corps even when not in uniform, the Commandant charges all commanders with ensuring all personnel in the Marine Corps and Marine Corps Reserve follow the standards of dress specified in paragraph 1005 of the Marine Corps Uniform Regulations Manual.

Civilian clothes are to reflect in style and quality the service "C" uniform, which is the short sleeve, collared shirt with appropriate trousers, skirt or slacks. Inappropriate civilian attire worn by Marines is apparently a regular thing aboard New River, and I often hear the line "This is the way we do things in the 'wing', we are more

relaxed than the ground side."

In my short Marine Corps career I've served at the "desert paradise" of Twentynine Palms, Calif., and "The Rock", Okinawa, Japan.

At these commands, a Marine wearing inappropriate civilian clothing or simply not wearing his shirt tucked in would be pulled to the side and be given a "loud speech" that would guarantee the incident didn't happen again. Officers, staff noncommissioned officers and NCOs were always setting the example for younger Marines to follow.

One time while in "2-9", my battalion executive officer saw me walking around the barracks with my shirt un-tucked, it was a Saturday night and my friends and I were about to hit the clubs in Palm Springs. What was he doing there that late during the weekend? He was taking the time to tour the barracks and ensure the well being of his Marines and Sailors. In this case, he ensured his Marines were adhering to appropriate standards of dress.

The major had us stand at parade rest in front of him while he corrected us. I clearly remember his words after he snapped his fingers and pointed right at me, "You're giving a bad impression." This was all it took.

Never again was my shirt un-tucked. I

made it my goal that after being yelled at by the battalion XO nobody else would have to remind me of the way Marines are supposed to look while on liberty.

Here, when a fellow Marine is seen not complying with the latest edition of Marine Corps Order P1020.34, heads are often turned the other way and eyes are closed.

I understand there is no perfect world where Marines comply with every written or verbal order. A bigger effort should be made in trying to get all Marines to ensure their dress and personal appearance are conservative and commensurate with the highest standards traditionally associated with the Marine Corps, especially now that all warfighters are under the microscope of the nation.

While serving with the 3rd Marine Division I was given a card with the civilian clothing regulations for Marine Corps Bases Japan. I carry this card with me at all times and I still follow it because I believe these regulations can well apply to any unit or duty station.

We as Marines should double check each other and ensure we represent the Corps well and with pride. These are some of the things that make us stand out as the few and the proud.

Dress Standards

1. Footwear- Shower shoes, flip-flops, dive booties, and bare feet are permitted at swimming pools and beaches only. Sandals and casual style footwear are appropriate without socks.

2. Shirts & Blouse- Shirts and blouses will be worn in manner of service uniform shirt. Most shirts, to include all T-shirts, jerseys and polo shirts will be tucked in. Only Hawaiian-style or shirts too short to be tucked in may be worn outside the trouser/shorts. In no case will shirts with tapered tails or those that hang below the crotch be worn outside the trousers/shorts. No tank

tops are authorized.

3. Pants, Shorts, Skirts- Clean and serviceable trousers or shorts, with a belt (if belt loops are present) are the standard. The size and fit of the trousers, shorts or skirts will resemble the appearance of style reflected by the proper wearing of uniform trousers or skirts. Physical training gear, including sweat suits, warm-up suits, running suits and athletic shorts are not authorized except when participating in sports and/or physical events.

4. Headgear- Removal of headgear

(covers, ball caps, head-dress, etc.) is mandatory inside all facilities aboard Marine Corps installations unless in uniform and under arms. Ball caps will be worn correctly, brims to the front. No hairnets, wave-caps/doo-rags, handkerchiefs or nylon socks will be worn as headgear.

5. Headphones- Wearing headphones while walking, running, bicycling, inline skating or driving is prohibited.

6. Tattoos & Branding- Tattooing or branding any part of the head, face or neck is prohibited.

7. Body Piercing- Tongue and body piercing anywhere on the body is prohibited except females may wear two earrings in each ear while in civilian attire. Male Marines will not wear earrings.

8. Prohibited Civilian Clothing- Prohibited articles of clothing are those where the midriff is exposed, shirts or clothing with alcohol/tobacco brand advertisements, soiled or tattered clothing, or clothing with profanity, obscenities or offensive pictures.

Male Marines must maintain a clean shave at all times.

Counterterrorism: learn about it

The Provost Marshal's Office provides classes to aid New River personnel in detecting and reporting suspicious behavior

Sgt. Christine C. Odom
correspondent

Terrorists have made an impact on the world for decades, thriving on chaos and causing the tragic loss of human lives.

In an effort to heighten terrorism awareness, the Provost Marshal's Office held an eight-hour long period of instruction on Counterterrorist Surveillance Strategies at the Station Theater on May 6, with the aid of William J. Ikner, a law enforcement trainer/consultant from Sneads Ferry.

"A successful terrorist attack cannot occur without prior surveillance," said Ikner.

No one is excluded from being a

target, so it would be prudent for individuals to learn methods that make them less vulnerable to terrorists, he added.

"I want to raise the awareness level of my Marines as to some of the possible surveillance techniques that can be used against us," explained Maj. Bryan K. Wood, provost marshal. "My secondary reason is to also raise the awareness level of civilians who work and reside on Station."

Individuals authorized to receive counterterrorist surveillance training include active duty Marines, Sailors and civilians who have a direct relation with New River.

The course is designed to give law enforcement agencies and military

organizations a method for identifying possible targets of terrorism. The training helps develop a strong tactical mindset for hostile surveillance strategies, which can assist in the detection, investigation and apprehension of terrorists or criminals before their attacks can succeed.

"With this training they'll (Station personnel/residents) be better equipped to possibly identify some of their (terrorists) behaviors," said Wood.

According to Master Sgt. David P. Munson, PMO services chief, because of the nature of the information taught at the course and its sensitivity, only general topics can be discussed with the public for security reasons.

Topics focus on who conducts surveillance and why, types of surveillance, indicators of surveillance and the role of surveillance. Target identification and analysis are also

addressed.

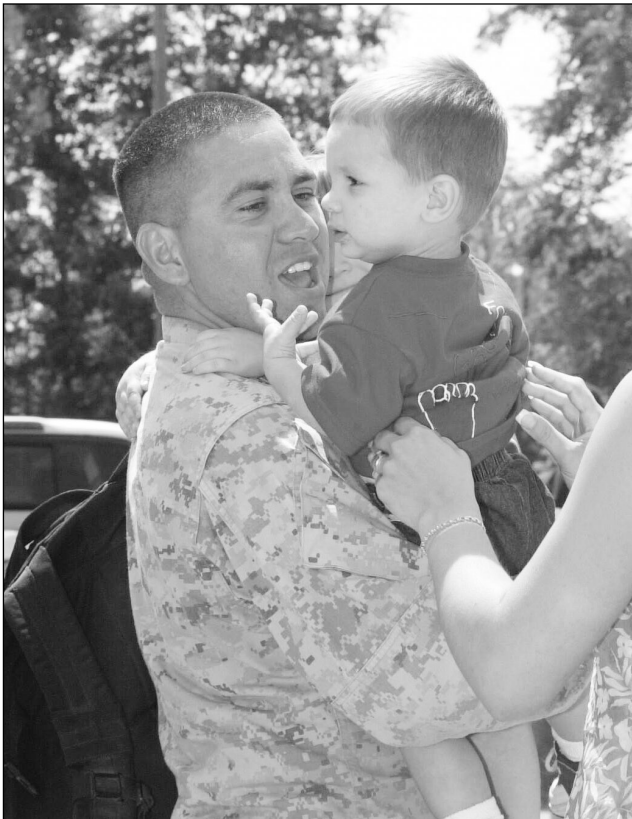
Ikner also offers a forty-hour course on counterterrorist surveillance for those who would like to take a more active role in the training. It breaks down to twelve hours of classroom time, and the rest is spent on field strategy sessions, role playing, planning, surveillance detection routes and target analysis.

This course is usually recommended for Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams or personnel who are responsible for the security and safety of fixed locations.

"Law enforcement officers are constantly on the 'front lines' of our nation's crime problems, but with training and knowledge, they will play a vital role in the 'War on Terrorism'," said Ikner.

For more information about the counterterrorist course contact Maj. Bryan K. Wood or Master Sgt. David P. Munson at 449-6111.

Daddy's Back!



Cpl. Wayne Campbell

Sergeant Vladimir Gonzalez, Marine Wing Support Squadron-272, returns to New River and his son Aliah, May 28.

Keeping you and your boat afloat

Cpl. Wayne Campbell
correspondent

The season is here once again to take the covers off the boats and personal watercrafts and go out for a day of fun in the water. But, before launching the boat into the water there are a few things you should know.

According to the U.S. Coast Guard's recent nationwide statistics, there were 6,419 boating accidents with 681 fatalities and 4,274 injuries that required medical attention in 2001.

The North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission Report of Boating Accidents for 2002 states there were a total of 175 accidents in the state with 11 of them being fatal. The month of June was the worst month for fatal accidents with a total of five and second worse for non-fatal accidents with a total of 34. July led the year for non-fatal accidents with 36 but only had one fatal accident.

"We have not had any accidents at the marina since I started working here eight years ago," said Ron Harris, manager of the Station Marina.

"Before anyone rents a boat from us they have to go through a class to get a boating permit," said Harris. "Then we take the individual out to the boat to make sure they know and understand how to operate the boat."

Harris added that marina attendants ensure that every individual in the boat has a properly fitting life jacket.

Every person aboard a watercraft or being towed by a watercraft must have a personal floatation device readily available, according to the U.S. Coast Guard Required Equipment for Recreational Vessels list.

According to the Coast Guard, 498 boaters

drowned in 2001. Life jackets could have saved the lives of approximately 420 of the boaters.

Approximately eight out of 10 victims in fatal boating accidents were not wearing a floatation device. Of the 11 fatal boating accidents in North Carolina only one individual was wearing a floatation device, but the device was too small for the individual, according to the WRC.

According to Harris, the marina does not allow any alcohol aboard any of their boats except for the pontoon boat.

"We allow the passengers of the pontoon boat to have alcohol but the driver of the boat is not allowed to drink at all," said Harris.

Alcohol use contributed to 27 percent of the fatal accidents in North Carolina, according to the WRC.

The effects of alcohol contributed to 273 accidents nationally. Alcohol accounted for 34 percent of all boating fatalities.

Boaters are 10 times more likely to be in an accident while operating a watercraft with a blood alcohol concentration above .10 percent than those who have a zero BAC percent.

"State law for blood alcohol concentration is the same as if you were on the road, .08 percent," said Harris. "While in the water you can be stopped by the Marine Patrol, the Wildlife Resource Commission or the Coast Guard."

"We also patrol our boundaries every hour to hour-and-a-half, depending on the amount of boats we have out, to see how the boaters are doing and making sure they are obeying all the rules of the waterway," said Harris.

Before heading out for a day of adventure on the water take a moment to think about the situations you will be facing and prepare. The waters can lead to a day of fun or a day of tragedy.



Cpl. Wayne Campbell

Approximately eight out of 10 victims in fatal boating accidents were not wearing a floatation device.

Florida Marine takes monthly honor

Sgt. Joshua S. Higgins
contributor

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. -- A Coral Springs, Fla., Marine received the May 2003 Service Member of the Month award during a banquet at the Paradise Point Officers Club May 19.

The Jacksonville/Onslow County Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee presented the award to Cpl. Christopher P. Kopp, travel auditor, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Marine Corps Air Station New River. Members of Kopp's chain of command at the New River finance office submitted him for the award based on his continuous outstanding performance as a Marine.

"(Kopp) stands out within the

office and the entire squadron," said Capt. Greg Harris, finance officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. "He successfully performs a multitude of duties while always focusing on mission accomplishment."

After completing recruit training December 1999 at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., Kopp moved on to attend Marine Combat Training at Camp Geiger, and a three-month Financial Management Course at Camp Johnson. He said he joined the Marine Corps because it gave him an opportunity to serve his country while receiving great benefits.

"A recruiter came to my high school and told my class about everything from guaranteed college to free medical care," said Kopp. "I knew

from that moment being a Marine was something I wanted to do."

Kopp performs duties as a rifle and pistol marksmanship coach, the financial office's webmaster and an information systems coordinator, in addition to his job as a travel auditor. He said he enjoys providing services for and interacting with customers on a daily basis.

"I like dealing with Marines one-on-one every day," said Kopp. "I get a sense of accomplishment when their finances are in order."

Kopp said he also enjoys doing volunteer work. For the last two years he participated in the Relay for Life fund-raiser and dedicated time as an event coordinator for the Onslow County Special Olympics.

Kopp will soon be dedicating more time at home with his wife, Kimberly, who is three months pregnant.

"I can't wait to have a child," he said. "I have always loved kids, and now I have the chance to have one of my own."

Some of the gifts he received include a print of the Beirut Memorial, an afghan, a \$50 gift certificate to the Marine Corps Exchange, a \$100 savings bond compliments of First Citizens Bank, a \$25 gift certificate for Tideline Marine, Inc., a K-Bar knife, a one-night stay at the Sneads Ferry Holiday Inn, and a 13-inch TV from Sanders Ford.

Kopp will now compete for the committee's 2003 Service Member of the Year Award and a four-day Caribbean cruise for two.

Huey, Cobra upgrades reach 1K flight hours

Naval Air Systems Command
public affairs

NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT

RIVER, Md. -- In a culmination of a busy month of flying, both here and in the high desert of Colorado, an all-Marine crew took the Corps' newest light/attack helicopters through the 1,000-hour mark May 13.

Flying a functional check of the Stability and Control Augmentation Software in preparation for a test of the UH-1Y Huey's Automatic Flight Control System, the crew of Maj. Pat Lindauer, Maj. Dean Putnam and crewchief Sgt. Aaron Jameson rolled the program into four digits to score the latest achievement for the H-1 Upgrades program.

Of five test aircraft, two (AH-1Z-1 Super Cobra and UH-1Y-1) are currently flying high-altitude tests in Alamosa, Colo. While the others continue to achieve test objectives here, according to program officials.

"Last month Z-3, and Y-2 both exceeded 30 flight hours for the month, while Z-1 and Y-1 exceeded 20 flight hours," said Robin H. Locksley, H-1 Upgrades Flight Test Team leader. "These availability rates [of flight test aircraft] are an excellent indicator of future performance, as the specification only calls for planned availability of 25 flight hours per month. During four of the last five months, the flight test team has exceeded the number of planned test events and is on glide-slope to exceed the planned events for May as well."

Contributing to the overall achievement of the test team are the individual milestones accrued by each of the test aircraft.

"Y-2 recently reached the 100-flight-hour mark," Locksley said. "Z-3 is projected to reach the 100-hour mark this week. Z-1 will reach the 500-hour mark this week if the weather is good in Alamosa."

After more than 12 hours of cross-country flying that included a fly-by of the Bell plant in Texas where they were built, as well as several overnight stops, AH-1Z-1 and UH-1Y-1 arrived on the high-desert plateau of Western Colorado to begin high-altitude testing last week, according to Lt. Col. Nick Hall, government flight test director for the H-1 Integrated Test Team here.

Testing where high-density altitudes exist closer to ground level allows the team to test the aircraft's performance and handling close to the ground, but still where the air isn't as thick as at sea level, according to Hall.

"With the field elevation at 7,500 feet above sea level and favorable conditions (low winds and warmer temperatures)," Hall said, "we can conduct hover performance both in and out of ground effect, low airspeed sensor characterization and low airspeed critical azimuth testing efficiently."

Active-duty Marines assigned to the test program here play a pivotal role in each of the milestones achieved by the integrated test team, which

is comprised of both military and civilian members representing the Marine Corps, Navy, civil service, contractor support and Bell Helicopter.

"My maintenance Marines have done a phenomenal job," said Capt. Jack Abate, H-1 Upgrades Maintenance Officer here. "Gunnery Sgt. Billy Potts, Staff Sgt. Gregory Shaw, Sgt. Michael Montanez, and Cpl. Adam Phipps are currently supporting Z-1 in Alamosa, Colorado; two crewchiefs, Staff Sgt. Eric Jazak and Sgt. Skylar Panter, flew in the back of Y-1 cross-country to Alamosa and will stay to support as a maintenance crew.

"I also have Marines here who are involved with all maintenance to get each bird on a flight schedule everyday," Abate said. "In addition to these duties they also perform reliability and maintainability tracking, publication validation, maintenance procedure validation and logistics verification. They are very interested and involved, and with both developmental and operational test responsibilities they keep busy."

In addition to turning wrenches and keeping the aircraft available for tests, the Marines assigned to the team provide a more important asset to the team - a warfighter's perspective.

"I am impressed with their insight and maturity when making suggestions for solutions to known problems," Abate said. "The Marines also work closely with civilian maintenance personnel and have made an excellent influence on them also."

In addition to the Marines, the other members of the team are proving the efficacy of the integrated team concept, according to Locksley.

"The safe and efficient execution of this program is a testament to the professionalism and attention to detail the members of this team exhibit each and every day here in Hangar 109 and the engineering buildings, off-site at Alamosa, and at the Bell plants down in Texas," Locksley said. "This effort would not be possible without the tireless efforts of the H-1 Upgrades integrated team of military, contractor, and civil service professionals. Working shoulder-to-shoulder, this team will deliver these aircraft out to the warfighters."

This latest milestone, as well as the flights taking place in Colorado, add to an already impressive lineage - H-1 aircraft have totaled more than 27 million flight hours since 1958 when the "granddaddy" of all H-1's, the HU-1, was delivered. Since then, more than 16,000 H-1 helicopters have been produced, making it the most successful military aircraft in aviation history.

Remanufacture of the Marine Corps' UH-1N and AH-1W aircraft to the more than 80-percent-identical UH-1Y and AH-1Z is expected to save the Marine Corps approximately \$3 billion in operating and support costs over the 30-year expected lifespan of the aircraft. The UH-1Y and AH-1Z share a common drive train, rotor head, tail boom, avionics, software and controls.



courtesy of Bell Helicopter

Upgrades to the UH-1Y Huey and AH-1Z Super Cobra allow the aircraft increased speed and maneuverability. Testing on the systems has reached 1,000 flight hours.

MWSS-272 accomplishes support mission

The 'Untouchables' prove themselves by aiding Marine units while in Kuwait

Sgt. Clint W. Runyon
contributor

KUWAIT -- Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 supported four Marine Aircraft Groups across three separate Forward Operating Bases in the Central Command Area of Responsibility as a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The "Untouchables" were handed the enormous task of constructing and maintaining three air bases here during OIF. By improvising, adapting and crossing many hurdles the Marines got the job done. The result was an "untouchable" display of the skill and adaptability of the Marines in the squadron.

According to Lt. Col. J. K. Haviland, MWSS-272 commanding officer, after receiving the mission it was clear that there were challenges.

"We focused and devoted our efforts for success as we had a critically important job to do," Haviland said. "The Squadron task organized itself to equip the two Forward Operating Bases and one Expeditionary airfield.

"We also began a series of convoys throughout Iraq, later to be become known as the Jalibah and An Numinayah Express," he added.

Haviland credits his Marines with the squadron's success.

"Regardless of task or mission assigned, it was the indomitable spirit, mettle, and character of the Marines and Sailors in the Squadron, that in the end, made the difference," he said.

The "Untouchables" had many hurdles to overcome throughout the operation.

"We had to make some adjustments," said 1st Lt. Michael Libretto, MWSS-272 assistant operations officer. "We overcame the friction by communicating well with the other units to support their needs."

MWSS-272 provided air ground

support to a variety of different units.

"It seemed a little overwhelming at first working three operating bases," said Chief Warrant Officer Richard Carmichael, MWSS-272 engineers division chief, "but the Marines never wavered. They were steadfast all the way through this operation."

Approximately 110 Marines from MWSS-273 from MCAS Beaufort, S.C., augmented to MWSS-272 for the operation.

"Being able to bring (MWSS-) 273 in so quickly and still be able to complete the task was a bridge that had to be crossed," said Carmichael. "The augmentation was a quick and smooth transition and we didn't miss a beat."

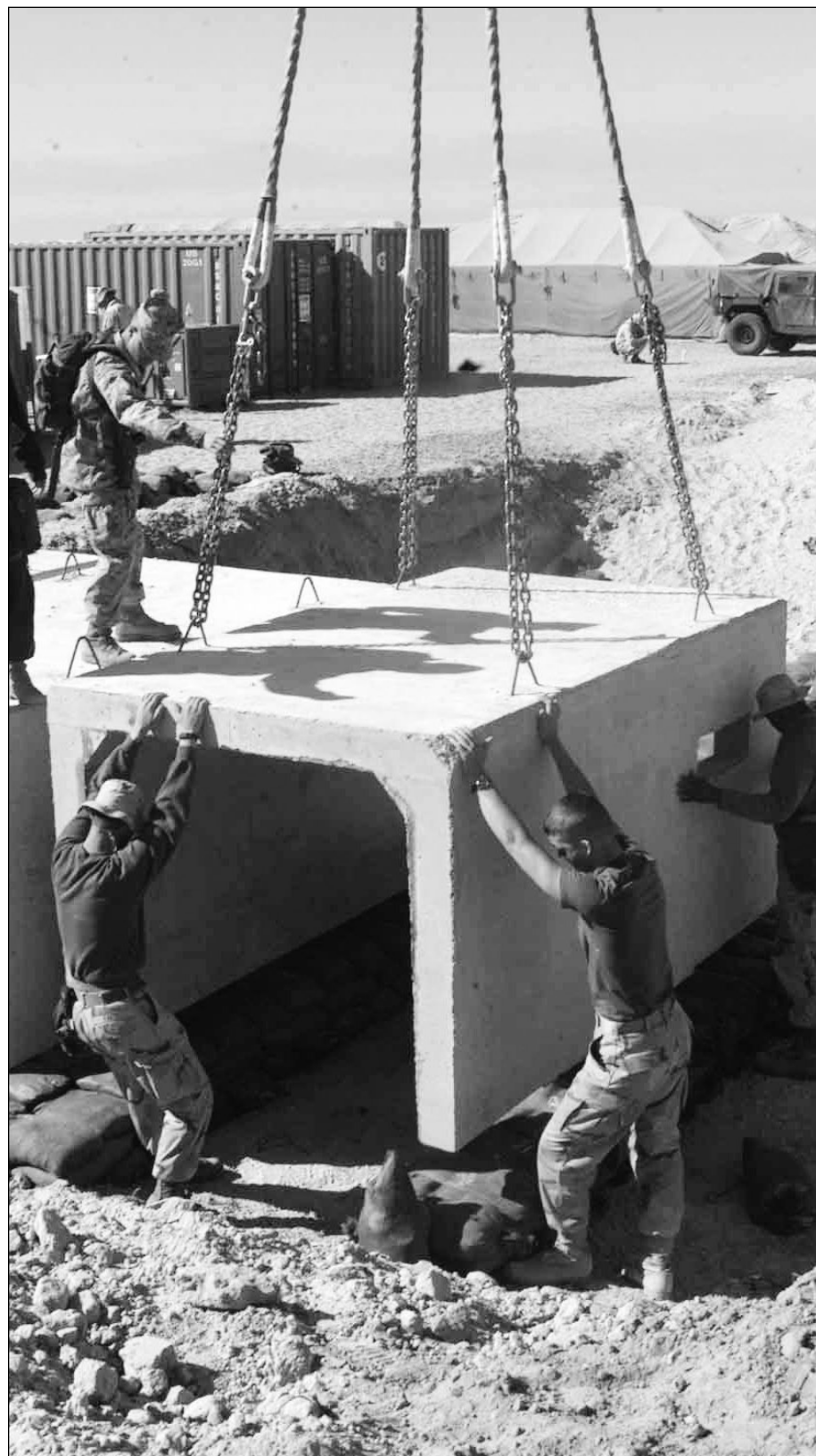
"When the combat hostilities kicked off, our Marines senses heightened," said Libretto. "It gave them drive and motivation to continue what they were doing and perform in a situation they had never been in before. The convoys into Iraq were definitely eye openers for everyone and the highlight of my time here."

Another hurdle the unit overcame was their mission to build and operate an expeditionary airfield. This was needed for KC-130 supply movement operations and a helicopter refueling point.

"It was a defining moment when the C-130's first touched down at the expeditionary airfield," said Libretto. "We have effectively conquered that part of the battle in the sense of airfield support."

Carmichael agrees with Haviland and credits the Marines in the squadron for the success of the mission.

"The magnitude of the things these Marines have done out here is immense," he said. "All through my career I've seen Marines do amazing things, but what these Marines did here is probably one of the most amazing things I've seen happen."



Lance Cpl. Eric A. Archer

Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 direct a cement block into a bunker hole during the squadron's deployment in Kuwait.

MAG-29 provides care for Iraqi citizens

Cpl. Theresa E. Seng
correspondent

JASSAN, Iraq -- American forces put the battles behind them in the lands that Christ walked and began the humanitarian aid that is so desperately needed. Marines and the medical department from Marine Aircraft Group-29 joined forces with Shock Trauma Platoon 9 and 4th Light Armor Reconnaissance, a reserve unit, to begin the Medical Civic Action Program here last month.

In a small town littered with garbage, where children ran the streets barefoot and donkeys roamed wild, medical care was urgently needed. 4th LAR spearheaded the program and medical officers, corpsmen and Marines, brought medicine and knowledge the locals didn't have access to and served to improve relations between America and the poorest people of Iraq.

It was reported that, by the end of a seven-hour day, 514 people had been seen, evaluated and treated, said Navy Lt. Gregory S. McNabb, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-29 medical officer. The majority of them had the same diseases found in the United States, such as high blood pressure, arthritis and asthma. Many of the children had ear infections and parasitic infections from the water, and there was also a large amount of genetic birth defects.

"It was extremely overwhelming personally and professionally," said McNabb. "It was so rewarding to bring medicine that's routine in America to a third-world village. Out of my six years in the medical profession this topped it all."

Navy Chief Robert E. Brown, leading chief petty officer for the medical department of Marine Aircraft Group-29, whole heartedly agrees with McNabb.

"Interacting with the local populous has been the most rewarding experience out here," said Brown, who has seen many afflictions as a casualty evacuation corpsman. "The fact that these people opened up to us and bared their suffering so we could help them had a huge impact on me."

The medical staff wasn't alone in being affected by helping the locals. 1st Lt. Janna J. Jackson, MAG-29 fiscal officer, volunteered to be a part of the mission.

"The smiles and thankfulness

expressed were so rewarding," she said. "This gave me an inner peace to know we were here for the right reasons.

These poor people live so miserably and were really grateful for our help."

One old woman who couldn't speak any English came back after she was treated, recalled Jackson.

"She opened up her bag and inside was mounds of warm, fresh bread. She insisted on giving it and refused payment for the bread, but a few dollars replaced the bread anyway," said Jackson.

Jackson said that the aid also made her think about her life in America and how blessed she is.

"Americans judge happiness on material possessions," she said. "But the mothers here showed off their children even though they didn't have shoes to wear. As miserable as things were for them, they still smiled, and the children had fun playing with nothing."

"I was shocked at the position of their females in society," said McNabb. "I knew what their societal norms were, but to see it was amazing.

Frustrating as it was, the women refused medical treatment from me. Their needs didn't outweigh their cultural boundaries. The women Marines were essential to this mission. Without them none of the Iraqi women would've been treated."

It wasn't just the male medical officers who were faced with the problems regarding the difference of the sexes. With her head uncovered and wearing trousers Jackson said the Iraqi men stared at her like she was an alien from another planet. She also said they were very concerned with whether she was married or not.

Not only were

there cultural boundaries to overcome, but the clinic they set up in was less than ideal by American standards.

"It was dismal to say the least," McNabb said. "There were flies landing on open wounds, and it wasn't the cleanest place in the world. This just proved meaningful medical care can be given in remote places, and that sterility is over rated," he joked.

The whole mission was an eye-opening experience for all involved and everyone said they wish they could have done more. McNabb said he wished he could've taken some of the children home with him.

"Some of the children needed special evaluations for definitive treatment," he said. "The Iraqis came with

high hopes, and I really wish I could have referred them onto a specialist and have it mean something."

His greatest frustration was the desire to do more.

Everyone wanted to do more, but unfortunately the MEDCAP was a one-day mission.

At the end of the extremely busy day the unused medicine was given to the Iraqi doctors and the town's people flocked to the vehicles to say goodbye.

The positive impact it had on the locals spoke measures to Brown.

"This helped place one more stone in the foundation for the relations between the Iraqis and American Forces," he said. "I hope to do more of these in the future."



Sgt. Juan Vara

Hundreds of family members gathered at the hangar of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-263, May 26, to welcome their loved ones as the squadron flew in. The 'Thunder Eagles' were returning from a nine-month deployment with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable).

'Thunder Eagles' flock home

Sgt. Juan Vara
correspondent

Memorial Day is now even more memorable for thousands of family members and friends of Marines and Sailors from MCAS New River.

More than 570 warfighters from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-263 returned May 26, after a nine-month deployment with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable).

Taking advantage of the national holiday, thousands came from all over the United States to receive the "Thunder Eagles", affectionally known as the "Thunder Chickens", with arms wide open after their extended deployment.

"We were very scared when he left," said Robert E. Zipf, father of Sgt. Robert E. Zipf II, an airframes mechanic with HMM-263. "We were scared but proud. We knew it was what he had to do and that he was well trained."

According to Zipf, communication played a vital role throughout the deployment.

"He (his son) always kept us informed. Probably the most important thing is that he always had a lot of people taking care of him," said Zipf. "Everyone was taking care of each other."

While deployed, the squadron took part in peace-keeping operations in Kosovo, supported the mission of the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa and conducted combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Under the command of Lt. Col. John C. Kennedy, HMM-263 provided assault support and played a key role in the movement of personnel and supplies.

The squadron was reinforced by detachments from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-772, Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-269, Marine Attack Squadron-231, Marine Air Control Group-28, Marine Wing Support Squadron-271 and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-29.

The 26th MEU (SOC) replaced the 24th MEU (SOC) as the forward deployed element in the Mediterranean.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Brig. Gen. James F. Flock, assistant wing commander, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, greets Lt. Col. John C. Kennedy and McAvoy, HMM-263 commanding officer and sergeant major, were in charge of approximately 570 Marines and Sailors supporting Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Assault helicopters from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-263 fly over New River, May 26, after nine months of deployment with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable).



Sgt. Juan Vara

Logan A. Thumm, 2, and Megan A. Henderson, 1, play around, May 26, while waiting for their fathers, Captains Douglas Thumm and Lance Henderson, CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter pilots assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-263.



Sgt. Juan Vara

Corporal Jeremy H. Bowers, an AH-1W Super Cobra mechanic assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-263, is greeted by his girlfriend, Tracey L. Born, who drove from Annapolis, Md., to see her significant other return from a nine-month deployment with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Multi talented Marine helps his squadron in many ways

Sgt. Juan Vara
correspondent

Helicopter mechanics aboard New River are a common sight. Although all are unique in their own way, one CH-46E mechanic assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-266 stands out from the rest.

Corporal Luis F. Correia, a Kearny, N.J., native, speaks five different languages and has used each one of them to help units from New River, Cherry Point and MCAS Beaufort, S.C., accomplish their mission.

Born in South Africa, Correia was raised in Portugal and moved to Kearny in 1987. After graduating High School he worked at the Newark International Airport as an airline systems instructor. He enlisted in the Corps in 1998.

In June of 1999 Correia came aboard Station and was assigned to HMM-266. For his outstanding work with the "Fighting Griffins", he was named first mechanic of aircraft 07 in November 2000.

"He's definitely a real hard worker," said Staff Sgt. Anthony E. Dorsey, the squadron's Central Technical Publications Library chief. "He worked for me for two years and stands out because of his can-do attitude. He always stays really busy and always finds ways to get things done."

Dorsey, a San Fernando,

Calif., native, has known Correia since October of 1999.

Correia shipped out with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit in April 2001 as an expeditor dealing with the movement of goods and supplies for the Air Combat Element. It was during this deployment when his proficiency in Spanish, Italian, French and Portuguese were discovered. During visits to Spain, Italy and France, Correia served as translator for MEU representatives and European media.

"I was raised in Europe and from being there I picked up the languages," said Correia. "The only ones I had instruction on were Portuguese and English."

In March of 2002, assigned as expeditor for the "Black Knights" of HMM-264, Correia took part in the Weapons and Tactics Instructors Course at MCAS Yuma, Ariz.

Upon his return to New River, he traveled with his squadron to Spain in support of NATO's exercise Dynamic Mix '02. Originally sent there as expeditor, Correia was reassigned as translator and liaison between the ACE of Camp Lejeune's 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade and the Operations Command Center of Zaragoza Air Base, Zaragoza, Spain.

"He did a 'bang-bang' job during Dynamic Mix," said Sgt. Maj. Pedro Malu, HMM-

266 sergeant major. "He was able to make life easier for the folks who took part in the exercise."

The dry heat of Yuma embraced Correia again last September. He was there as a CH-46E mechanic, his actual military occupational specialty, with the "Blue Knights" of HMM-365.

Currently, Correia is working with the corrosion control section of the squadron. He is in charge of hazardous waste, corrosion prevention of the helicopters, painting of the aircraft and respiratory programs.

"He's like the squadron go-to guy," said Gunnery Sgt. Jeff S. Oakley, the squadron's airframes division chief. "He's been like that since I've known him. Anything you need, go to him and he makes it happen."

Another one of Correia's talents is art. Almost all of the paintings found in the squadron's hangar have been retouched, repainted or painted by him.

"As far back as I can remember I've been interested in painting," said Correia. "I do arts that involve pencils, pens and brushes."

Some of the types of art Correia creates are stippling, crosshatching and watercolors and everything requires high attention to detail.

"His painting abilities are unmatched," said Malu. "The 'Griffins' of today and the ones of the future are much improved due to the hard work of Corporal Correia."

His latest project is designing a patch for the squadron to wear later this year when they become the ACE for the 22nd MEU.

According to Oakley, Correia works on his paintings during his personal time.

"That's a real morale booster," said Master Gunnery Sgt. James B. Hanagan, the squadron's maintenance chief. "The other Marines here see him as one of their own creating something for them."

Malu said Correia possess-

es outstanding human relations skills, his knowledge of different languages pays a lot of dividends, and it is noncommissioned officers like Correia from whom the Marine Corps benefits.

"We should have more NCOs like him. He has a lot of good ideas and doesn't have a problem expressing them," said Malu. "He's not afraid to talk to senior Marines about any

concerns, whether it be a concern of his or one of the junior Marines entrusted to him."

Scheduled to separate from the Corps in November, Correia said he wants to go back to the airlines in Newark and continue his education.

"He's going to be successful no matter where he goes," said Oakley. "Whether he stays in the Marine Corps or he gets out."



Sgt. Juan Vara

Corporal Luis F. Correia works on the 22nd MEU patch.

Handling the return home, together

USMC personnel returning home from the war in Iraq and from deployment will be facing a period of readjustment in the weeks ahead as they return to family, friends, and work routines. Although coming home is a joyous event, it is also a time of tremendous change. Rebuilding routines and relationships is a special challenge.

MCCS One Source has four new life articles to help during this time of adjustment:

- Returning to Work Following Military Duty (for the returning reservist)
- Supporting Military Personnel When They Return to Work (for managers)
- When a Co-Worker Returns to Work From Military Duty
- Returning to Single Life Following Deployment

MCCS One Source offers free, confidential assistance to help you and the other important people in your life handle this transition. MCCS One Source can help you:

- Know what to expect during the readjustment home
- Make the transition back to work
- Find ways to get and offer support
- Build new routines
- Reconnect with family and friends

Readjustment takes time, patience, and understanding. Find the support and information you need, for yourself and the important people in your life. Get in touch with the MCCS One Source anytime by calling Personal Services at 449-6110 or accessing www.mccsonesource.com user id: marines; password: semper fi

MCCS One Source also has helpful materials available in Spanish.

Para información sobre este programa en español, visite en-línea en www.mccsone-source.com o llame al (888) 732-9020.

MCCS One Source is available at no cost to you. It's effective and easy to use. And best of all, it's here for you and your entire family to use-any time of day, wherever you are. So get in touch with us today. We have consultants who speak Spanish and offer simultaneous translation into more than 140 other languages. To access TTY/TDD lines, call (800) 346-9188.

Information provided by MCCS

H&HS Plays the Field



Sgt. Juan Vara

Marines from Station Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron participate in the tug-o-war event at their field meet, May 21.

Topsail restaurant shows appreciation for Marines



Cpl. Wayne Campbell

Guests serve themselves at the Military Appreciation Lunch.

Cpl. Wayne Campbell
correspondent

TOPSAIL ISLAND, N.C. --

The owner of Paliotti's restaurant and lounge at the Villa Capriani showed his appreciation for the Marines by hosting a Military Appreciation Lunch Sunday.

Joe Paliotti, restaurant owner, organized the free event for military members of New River and their families.

"Joe is a true humanitarian," said Domenick Irrera. "He is an all around great guy who cares a lot for these guys."

"This is the third year Joe has been doing this for the Marines," Irrera added. "He gives me a call every time he does this and I really enjoy coming out and showing these guys how much I appreciate them."

Also in attendance were William Stamper, mayor of Topsail

Beach, and Zander Guy, mayor of Surf City.

"This is a great way to show how grateful we are to the Marines," said Guy.

"I think civilians take them for granted in military communities and don't understand how valuable their freedom is until it is threatened," he said.

Major Murray Chapman, Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 executive officer, said he attended the event last year and enjoys coming because the food is great. Chapman returned from Iraq on Wednesday, was invited to the event, and was told to invite a few Marines from his squadron.

Approximately 75 Marines and family members attended the event.

The event provided New River Marines and their families with an opportunity to enjoy dinner by the beach and realize that what they do is appreciated by the community.



WANTED

BY THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION



KWIK-MART #109
JACKSONVILLE
05/15/03 2:27:54a



KWIK-MART #109
JACKSONVILLE
05/15/03 2:31:17a

This individual is wanted for questioning in connection to the theft of a wallet from the Tarawa Terrace II basketball courts. The theft of the wallet occurred between 1600 and 2200, 14May03. At 0231, 15May03, the victim's ATM Card was utilized at the Kwik Mart Gas station located at 467 Western Blvd, Jacksonville NC. The individual in question is a black male, between the ages of 16 and 30. This individual was wearing a black "Do-Rag", gray sweatshirt, black basketball style shorts with white stripes, and black low-top sneakers.

If you know this person, or their whereabouts, please contact:

**Investigator Trevor Rednour or Investigator Clinton Matthews
Criminal Investigation Division
Provost Marshal's Office, Camp Lejeune, NC
451-4326 or 451-4327**

Personal Services Center Information

Sign Language Class

Every Tuesday

4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Want to learn a different language? An introductory course in sign language will be given for area youth at the Community Youth Center.

Pre-Separation Brief

11 & 25 June

7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

This mandated brief covers all required information for the service member and spouse separating from the military way of life.

Topics discussed include: Pay entitlements, VA benefits, financial management, educational opportunities, transportation of household goods, job service and more ... Pre-registration mandatory through your unit transition counselor.

Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

18 & 19 June

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

A two-day career options workshop, which helps you assess your knowledge, skills and abilities and apply your military-acquired skills in the civilian employment sector. Topics include resumé preparation, job search, interview skills, dress standards, job negotiations and much more. Pre-registration required through your unit transition counselor.

Military Spouse-Local Employment Seminar

24 June

9 - 10:30 a.m.

Pre-registration required. Available for spouses and family members seeking part-time or full-time employment in the local community. Topics discussed will include networking, resumé or application assistance, interview tips and more.

For more information on our programs or to pre-register for one of the classes, please call us at 449-6110/6185 or visit our Web site at <http://www.lejeune.usmc.mil/mcasnr/fsc/fschome.htm>

New Staff Bachleor Pad

Colonel Dennis T. Bartels, Station commanding officer, officially opened the new Transient Staff Noncommissioned Officer's Quarters, May 30, in a ribbon cutting ceremony. The new quarters are the first of their kind for New River. The project took two years of planning and three years of renovations. It consists of two buildings and 51 rooms of which approximately 40 rooms have already been filled.



Cpl. Wayne Campbell

FROM THE FRONT LINES

MAG-29 remembers the fallen

Cpl. Theresa E. Seng
correspondent

USS SAIPAN -- The Marines and Sailors of Marine Aircraft Group-29 and Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines aboard the ship held a Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance May 26, to honor their brothers who gave their lives in the name of liberty during Operation Iraqi Freedom and to give thanks that so few lives were lost in their own units.

Almost every Marine and corpsman attended the ceremony held in the hangar bay where prayers and music filled the air and a few tears were shed.

The service was held on Memorial Day to honor those who were no longer present and gave more complete, personal meaning to the national holiday.

Originally called Decoration Day, the holiday was officially proclaimed May 5, 1868, by Gen. John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, and was first officially observed at the end of the month that same year by placing flowers on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

By 1890 all the states in the Union recognized the holiday even though the South refused to celebrate. They honored their dead on separate days until after World War I, when the holiday went from honoring just Civil War veterans to all service members who gave their lives in the pursuit of freedom.

It was in 1971, that Memorial Day became a federal holiday, after Congress passed the National Holiday Act ensuring a three-day weekend for all federal holidays.

A long weekend is the way most observe Memorial Day, but there are many more meaningful ways to observe, such as wearing red poppies. Monia Michael, a poet inspired by one of the verses she composed for the holiday, began the tradition of wearing poppies as a sign of remembrance.

The 3rd U.S. Infantry has celebrated in the same fashion every year since

the late 1950s. The soldiers place flags on 26,000 graves at Arlington National Cemetery the Thursday before Memorial Day and maintain a constant watch throughout the weekend to ensure the flags remain standing.

Another way many Americans observe the holiday is by flying the American Flag half-staff until noon, or flying the Prisoner of War, Missing in Action flag.

In December of 2000 the "National Moment of Remembrance" was established where Americans all over the country take a moment to reflect at 3 p.m., local time. Many places play "Taps" then as a tribute.

This year the Marines and Sailors aboard the Saipan took more than a moment in the afternoon to remember their brothers.

The service helped the Marines and Sailors come to some sort of closure concerning their combat and stabilization missions involved in OIF, said Cmdr. Johnny Poole, MAG-29 chaplain, who spearheaded planning the service.

He said he took the reins because the Marines and Sailors he's responsible for selflessly gave of their selves and saw their brothers shed blood so that others might come to know freedom.

"In light of these things, I believe it's important to thank God for His presence with us, our families and our fallen comrades as well as to reflect on the significance of the history we have just made," he continued. "Also to reaffirm our commitment to never forget those who serve, sacrifice and die so that others may live free."

The man who was chosen to speak and reflect on the importance of the events that just took place was Lt. Col. Royal P. Mortensen, commanding officer of BLT 2/8. Mortensen said he was overcome with trepidation after he agreed to speak at the ceremony. "I only wanted to do justice to what the ceremony was about," he said.

While he gave his speech he said he had to detach himself from the



Cpl. Theresa E. Seng

Sergeant Major Charles E. Tucker, Marine Aircraft Group-29 sergeant major, led the Marines and Sailors in the Marines Prayer during the Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance.

moment because he spoke about something very personal to him: defining moments.

"This war is the defining moment for the majority of us for our adult lives. Combat has that effect," he said. "Any defining moment becomes most meaningful when it is shared with others we care about, and we are blessed to carry on and realize that defining moment."

"We have to look to our brothers and sisters who shared those defining moments with us not only to come to grips with and remember those who gave their lives, which is the essence of Memorial Day, but to remember those who survived and that we all have a life to live," he continued somberly.

From the reciting of the Marines Prayer to the wreath laying that closed the ceremony, the mood was heavy while Marines and Sailors reflected on what Mortensen had said and the scrip-

ture readings by Col. Robert E. Milstead Jr., MAG-29 commanding officer.

After "Taps" was sounded, signaling the end of the ceremony, the (Marines) walked away, hopefully with the same sense of serenity as Lance Cpl. Fidel A. Rodriguez, an infantryman with Golf Company, 2/8, did.

"This ceremony made me feel like we were all recognized and like we weren't out there for nothing," said Rodriguez. "But what really got me was 'Taps.' I've heard it a million times, but it never meant anything until now."

Corporal Ashley D. Nix, Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Squadron-269 crewchief who received her combat aircrew wings the same day, agrees with Rodriguez.

"The ceremony made me feel like we had a purpose out here and that those who didn't make it back will never be forgotten," she said.